

National Organic Standards Board Meeting, May 13-14, 2003, Austin, Texas

Crops Committee Recommendation: Potassium Silicate

Introduction: The NOSB received a petition to consider Potassium Silicate as a "synthetic substance allowed for use in organic crop production as plant disease control" and as a "synthetic substance allowed for use in organic crop production as plant or soil amendments".

Background: All three reviewers and the Committee agree that Potassium Silicate is a synthetic.

The Committee discussed the use of Potassium Silicate as plant or soil amendment.

The TAP review discusses the ubiquitous nature of silica in soil and that non-synthetic substances (glauconite, also known as greensand, and silica oxide), are available as a soil amendment when silica is not abundant in the soil.

The Committee also discussed the use of Potassium Silicate as a plant disease control agent. The lack of availability of alternative methods of plant disease control was discussed extensively. Additionally the committee discussed the likelihood of misuse (application of potassium silicate as a fertilizer instead of as a plant disease control agent) of the material and concluded that the cost and the organic production and handling system plan would decrease this possibility.

Originally, the committee voted to allow the material but for disease control only under 205.601(i). However after discovering that the material had not received the EPA label required for pesticide use, the committee reconsidered that recommendation.

Recommendation

The Crops Committee recommends that the decision regarding Potassium Silicate be deferred until an EPA label is obtained.

Committee Vote:

Approve-4

Disapprove-0

Recuse-0

Absent-1

Abstain-0